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Finally, in whatever light Maine is observed, it is entitled to much attention. It was settled before any other part of New England, and about the same time with Virginia. The natives, assisted by their French auxiliaries, were more powerful than in any other place on the continent, and several times destroyed nearly all the inhabitants. Possessing an excellent soil; with a territory larger than that of Ireland and many European nations; covered with valuable timber; having commercial privileges superior to those of any other State, and a most enterprising population; it must become one of the most important members of our mighty confederacy. In 1825, one eighth of all the tonnage in the United States and one fifth of the tonnage employed in the fisheries were owned by Maine. More than ten thousand seamen were attached to its vessels; and the exports, including the live stock driven into the neighboring States and countries, amounted to more than eight million dollars.

ART. VI.—*Memoirs of Mrs. Inchbald.*

Memoirs of Mrs. Inchbald, including her Familiar Correspondence with Persons of her Time. To which are added the Plays entitled the Massacre and a Case of Conscience, now first published from her Autograph Copies. Edited by JAMES BOADEN, Esq. 2 vols. London.

SIR WALTER SCOTT, in the person of the young heir of Avenel, has forcibly delineated the enthusiastic delight with which a man witnesses, for the first time in his life, a dramatic representation. This pleasure is not often reserved for manhood: it is generally in our early days, that we behold for the first time the vast and shadowy green curtain, which shuts out from our view the splendors of a fairy-land. We are no critics then;—the eye roving entranced over gay columns, whose gilded fluting glitters in the lavish light, and a ceiling whence the heathen goddesses shower garlands on the heads of the spectators, receives at a *coup d'œil* the impression of a perfect building. We are then uninitiated in the *arcana* of the decorative art; we are too much dazzled to discover the coarseness

of the canvass or the touches of the pencil, and before we have time to think of commencing an investigation, the music leads our thoughts into another channel. Be it the composition of Rossini or Mozart, of Weber or Beethoven, it is equally celestial; the leader of the orchestra is a Paganini, and the 'concord of sweet sounds' the melody of the spheres. The Eleusinian veil, that covers the mysteries into which we are promised an initiation, rises to a ravishing symphony, and lo! a new world is before us;—various and vague feelings pass rapidly through the brain,—imagination for once beholds her dreams realized, and, at the falling of the curtain, we retire in silent amazement and delight.

Nor do we immediately undertake to analyze. The youthful mind is far from being philosophical, and, without a thought of the tendency of the amusement, or the moral conveyed by it, we give ourselves up to the delightful recollection of the past enjoyment, and the not less delightful anticipation of the future. But this intensity of emotion soon wears off, curiosity is excited with regard to the agents who produce so wonderful an effect, and a new direction is given to inquiry. We are soon like Wilhelm Meister, when a stealthy examination has shown him the personages of his mother's puppet-show lying side by side with motionless limbs, the inactive wires resting beside them. We perceive that there are certain springs which put all this human machinery in action, and we long to learn their principles. Our interest in the performers continues long after the decorations of the theatre have ceased to attract our admiration and attention. These, with their canvass materials and rude daubing, comprising the coarsely-framed scenery, the tin water-falls, the wooden trees, the patent incombustible flames, the wardrobe with its tinsel finery, its glass regalia and harmless weapons, give a shock to the imagination from which it never recovers. Our fairy-land is too palpable a cheat, the enchantments of Prospero are too evidently the contrivance of a carpenter, and the flight of Ariel too plainly depends on the action of a couple of stout cords. But the actors bear a scrutiny and yet remain enigmas,—their Protean power is a riddle,—their delivery a charm.

Thus our early predilections dispose us to regard with peculiar favor the lives of distinguished performers, and dramatic biography possesses, with most readers, a remarkable fascination. It is true that a man of taste and principle is too

often shocked and disgusted with the details presented to his view ; very often have actors, meriting the highest praise for histrionic talent, deserved the severest reprehension for their private life ; yet we are still willing to investigate, still hope to discover among them some who are worthy to be ranked with the ornaments of other professions. Nor are we always disappointed in these researches. We are not going into a discussion on the possibility of making the drama a school of morality, far less to assert that its effects have been invariably good ; that they might have been and may be so, we believe, but there is no occasion for giving our ideas upon this point at length. While the theatre is the cherished resort of the dissolute and thoughtless, while dramatic regulations must permit the vilest to have the most decisive influence in the selection of plays and the engagement of performers, we can regard it with no very favorable eye. But when, on taking a retrospective view of those who have devoted their lives and talents to the stage, we behold an individual pursuing a correct course through innumerable temptations, animated by the best motives and the warmest feelings, we cannot pass over so signal an example unnoticed. Of such the stage has not been utterly devoid. We cannot forget that Shakspeare trod the boards, and that Siddons, Kemble and Talma have flung over the poet's conceptions the light of their own genius.

It is not unimportant to trace the course of any human exertion, and to mark how the determined spirit, in spite of every obstacle, arrives at the summit of its ambition. It is thus that we learn how necessary are courage, perseverance, patience, and study to success ; how few spring at once, by the mere force of genius, to the zenith of a lasting fame. Those who have done so have been exceptions to a general rule, and not examples. We do not even know how many trials and failures Shakspeare made before he produced his master-pieces, and have no proof that he was the very unlettered man, he is generally represented to have been : certainly none, in the profusion of his classical allusions and images. We have seen a Kemble (Frances Ann), at once winning all hearts and all applause, but we have seen another of the same family (Mrs. Siddons), painfully toiling in provincial theatres, before her worth was acknowledged. Miss O'Neil, with all her beauty and talent, the fit representative of Juliet, lived many

years in abject poverty, and Edmund Kean was at one time an equestrian, at another, the hero of a booth.

The life of Mrs. Inchbald is as full of variety and incident, as strange and discouraging at its commencement and as successful in the wished-for results, as any which has yet fallen under our notice. With regard to the present Memoirs, we are glad to perceive that her papers and letters have formed the groundwork, and that Mr. Boaden is content with remaining rather in the shade. There existed a manuscript auto-biography, as in the case of Byron, which Mrs. Inchbald, from delicacy to the feelings of the living characters who figured in it, destroyed. So interesting was this memoir considered, that she was offered for it a thousand pounds. The editor has availed himself of Mrs. Inchbald's diary, and of many notes, papers and familiar letters, by the aid of which he has made out two very interesting volumes, possessing the authenticity, if not exactly the charm of an auto-biography. We are told that the lady, in her fits of spleen, would occasionally animadvert pretty severely upon the character of contemporaries, whom she perhaps esteemed at cooler and better moments. Mr. Boaden has judiciously repressed all such ebullitions of excited feeling.

Mrs. Inchbald, whose maiden name was Simpson, was born of respectable parents, at Standingfield, in the county of Suffolk, in 1753. The Simpsons appear to have been substantial and intelligent people, rather popular with their neighbors, and mixing occasionally in high society. Mrs. Inchbald had the misfortune to lose her father at the age of eighteen. This event cast a heavy gloom over the prospects of the family; but her mother struggled on against difficulty, and they contrived to live through their misfortunes. Elizabeth (Mrs. Inchbald), and her sisters, were noted for their uncommon beauty, which was the theme of admiration in whatever company they chanced to enter. But, strange as it may appear, the future heroine of many a drama, was affected with an inarticulateness in her speech, so great and distressing, that it banished her almost altogether from society, those only who had been brought up with her from childhood being able to comprehend her meaning in discourse. In consequence of this impediment, she contracted an ardent love of solitude and of reading, so that the defect, which she at first regarded as an irremediable misfortune, laid the foundation of the fame and emolument of her after life. She was altogether self-taught,

and has remarked in one of her earlier memoranda, that her brother George, who had great advantages of education, could never be taught to spell, while she and her sisters spelled readily and correctly from childhood. We are at liberty to conjecture the nature of her solitary readings. It is not to be supposed that a young girl, left to select her studies without advice, and naturally of a cheerful disposition, could plunge into polemics and political discussion. On the contrary, her companions were romances and volumes of poetry, particularly that of Shakspeare, the favorite of all ages. We are not surprised to find, that in the bosom of retirement she nursed the desire of seeing the world, that is, London. She was not unmindful of the means, while thinking of the end, and resolutely determined to go upon the stage. The girl, whom an impediment of speech had exiled from the companionship of equals, was to appear before the *élite* of the world of fashion in a brilliant theatre, to draw forth tears and admiration as the affectionate Cordelia, to carry all hearts along with her as the gentle Juliet, and to dazzle, electrify and instruct as Lady Townly.

Her desire to see London was communicated to her friends, who attempted to reason her out of it. But the future Rosalind had resolution, and when told that a sight of the 'great world' would only make her glad to return to the point from which she proposed starting, she could reply with Rasselas in his Happy Valley, 'you have given me now something to desire ; I shall long to behold the miseries of the world, since the sight of them is so necessary to happiness.' By perseverance, unaided and alone, she went to work to remedy the defect of her utterance, which she felt must be softened or removed, as a first step towards the accomplishment of her plans. She wrote out most of the long words in which she had encountered the greatest difficulty, and continually carried them about with her, frequently practising their pronunciation. She found also, that much of her stammering arose from the hurry and rapidity of conversation, and that stage declamation, being in a raised and artificial tone, and with fuller pauses, permitted a much greater time for enunciation. She accordingly enabled herself by practice, to go smoothly through passages of her favorite dramatic authors, and was encouraged to proceed in the course which she had chosen. Most of these trials must have been in secret, for her friends were opposed to her intention of going to

London and of acting. After having formed her determination and benefited by a little practice, she did not, like the heroine of a novel, immediately jump into a post-chaise, fly to London and throw herself on the protection of some manager, but she resolved to proceed with caution and regularity. In the beginning of the year 1770, we find her residing at Standingfield with her mother, her sister Deborah and her brother George. Four of her sisters were married; Anne and Dorothy to John and James Hunt, another sister to Mr. Huggins and another to Mr. Slender. Mention is made of these persons, in consideration of their agency in some parts of the London life of Mrs. Inchbald. The family appears to have been of a domestic turn, for the London sisters regularly corresponded with those at home. The duties of society, for Standingfield was by no means a mere hamlet, domestic avocations, and the weekly correspondence with the married sisters, prevented the residents at the old homestead from feeling the tedium of idleness. Mrs. Inchbald appears to have been a ready letter-writer, and extremely fond of epistolary communication. Mr. Boaden remarks, that the handwriting of the period of which we speak, was less systematic than it is at present,—individual character had a greater influence on chirography, and an inference could not unfrequently be drawn from the latter, directly at variance with that derived from the expressions of the writer. The observer, in such cases, must have been, we think, uncommonly clear-headed and intelligent. At this period, Miss Simpson applied by letter to Mr. Richard Griffith, manager of the Norwich Theatre, and asked him at once for an engagement, enjoining secrecy with regard to her intention of leaving home. His reply, which is more diplomatic than grammatical, we are tempted to subjoin.

‘ Tuesday afternoon. (no date).

‘ Madam,—I was just favored with yours, the purpose of which, depend upon it, shall be an entire secret. From some treaties which I have now depending with different performers, and some proposals given under my hand, until I have received answers to them, I cannot yet say it is in my power, as much as it is in my inclination to oblige you: if it should, be assured I shall be happy to do it. When you come to town, I should be glad to see and speak with you on this subject. In the meantime, I am, madam,

Your very humble servant,

RICHARD GRIFFITH.

The correspondence was carried on to the satisfaction of Mrs. Inchbald, who, inexperienced as she was, appears to have founded great expectations on the conventional civilities and commonplace politeness of the manager's letters. He was a man of the world, politic and polite, ready doubtless to secure a promising *debutante*, but unwilling to commit himself with a lady he had never seen. The demand of an engagement which was made in her first note, argues a tolerable opinion of her own powers, which is farther borne out by her selection of the highest walks of the drama as her legitimate range. We are not disposed severely to scrutinize the early ideas of such a woman as Mrs. Inchbald, beautiful, inexperienced and unadvised, but we cannot help smiling at the common self-sufficiency of juvenile aspirants for dramatic honors. Thomas Holcroft, for example, who was finally an adviser and literary friend of Mrs. Inchbald, and, if we remember rightly, a suitor for her hand at one period of her widowhood, was a beggar, a Newmarket stable-boy, and a cobbler, before he became an actor and an author. We do not make this allusion in the way of reproach, of course, but in proof of the self-confidence so necessary to an actor. Holcroft, with no opportunities of acquiring the manners of decent, not to say the highest society, started from the workbench to seek employment as the representative of the most exalted characters of the acted drama.

The idea of the Norwich manager had taken a strong hold upon the imagination of Mrs. Inchbald. On a leaf of her pocket-book, she had inscribed his name in large Roman capitals, like an inscription on an antique temple. R·I·C·H·A·R·D G·R·I·F·F·I·T·H. She adds, 'each dear letter of thy name is harmony.' The music of it appears rather equivocal to us, but we dare not question the lady's superior taste. Her brother George used frequently to amuse the family circle with dramatic readings, and, in his style, he daringly imitated the declamation of the Norwich actors. His taste for the stage grew rapidly upon him. After a while he became an actor, and his sister earnestly desired to follow his example. Her solitary hours were now assiduously devoted to the perusal of standard plays, and she wrote out at length the parts of Cordelia, Hermione, and others. Her mother was by no means adverse to the theatre, and accompanied her daughters to Bury, where they constantly attended the rehearsals of the morning and the representations of the evening. The annual

visit to Bury Fair was one of the treasured delights of the Simpson family, and, though but of few days' duration, gave intense pleasure both in anticipation and remembrance. It was to Elizabeth, what the 'annual gala of the race-ball' was to Lady Teazle, before her marriage with Sir Peter. It is not to be imagined that she attended rehearsals without coming into contact with the actors, and accordingly we find among the visitors of the party the names of Wilson, Crandell and others. Wilson was particularly attentive to Miss Simpson, and while Griffith still retained the place in her heart which he had gained by the euphony of his name, she scrupled not to receive a keepsake from the former, agreed to correspond with him, and received the welcome present of some books. Letters were accordingly exchanged, and Wilson ever after appeared in the light of a respectful and affectionate admirer. We cannot help observing here, that, like most beautiful women, even in her girlish years, she was rather a coquette.

Most of the brief memorials which preceded the work of Mr. Boaden, represented Mrs. Inchbald as flying from home to London in her *sixteenth* year, but it is now proved, that at *eighteen* she was still living with her mother at Standingfield. She then came to London on a visit to her sister Hunt. She determined, however, under cover of this visit to make applications to the director of some theatre, and go upon the stage. She naturally turned her thoughts to Griffith, with whom she had corresponded. During this visit she became acquainted with Mr. Inchbald, who was very attentive during her stay in London, and openly avowed the interest he felt in her. He was an actor of some talent, but apparently possessed of no great firmness or principle. Hypocrisy was not one of his faults; and he spoke with a tone of careless unreserve of the difficulties into which his former imprudent connexions had led him. His future wife seems to have regarded him with favor, but determined to proceed with caution and due deliberation. She was always ready to carry trifling to its utmost verge, but beneath a surface of levity there was a depth of character and a firmness of purpose which inspired respect, and finally insured success. She still meditated an engagement with Griffith, and, taking her sister as a companion, she called at the theatre, and had an interview with the admired manager. She appears to have been pleased

with the man, although the meeting did not lead to any important result. During Mr. Inchbald's absence from London to fulfil a theatrical engagement, she returned to Standingfield. She was not at all disposed to act precipitately with regard to any of her lovers, but continued her dramatic studies and her social visits without infirmity of purpose. Inchbald now wrote seriously to her, and she replied in a letter full of most singular levity and girlish coquetry, in which the substance of five or six pages was, that people were often deceived in marriage, that he himself had told her so, and that she was determined against becoming a wife. In the autumn she went to Bury Fair, and here she again beheld Griffith. About the same time, also, she saw her brother George and his wife act, and now confessed herself *very* unhappy.

In the year 1772, she determined to make an attempt, at all hazards, to go upon the stage. In her diary about this time is a very singular entry, which would provoke a smile from the lips of a Stoic.

Jan. 22d. Saw Mr. Griffith's picture.

28th. Stole it.

29th. Rather disappointed at not receiving a letter from Mr. Inchbald.

On the 10th of April, she packed up what necessaries she determined on taking with her in her flight to London, and wrote the following farewell to her mother, which she left upon her table.

‘By the time you receive this, I shall have left Standingfield, and perhaps forever. You are surprised, but do not be uneasy : believe the step I have taken, however indiscreet, is no ways criminal ; unless I sin by not acquainting you with it, which was impossible for me to do, though strongly pressed by the desire of giving you a personal farewell. I must now endure every pang,—one not lost to all feeling must,—on thus quitting the tenderest of parents ; I would say most beloved too, but cannot prove my affection ; yet time may ; to that I must submit the hope of gaining your regard.

‘The censure of the world I despise, as the most worthy have incurred the reproaches of that : should I ever think you wish to hear from me, I will write.’

She came to London in the stage coach, and immedi-

ately engaged lodgings at the 'Rose and Crown.' On the following day, she went out and bent her steps towards Charing Cross, intending to visit a distant connexion, who, as she was informed, lived opposite to Northumberland house. She however was forced to undergo the disappointment of finding that the family had quitted business entirely, and gone to reside in Wales. This was indeed a severe blow to her. She had counted upon this friendly house as an asylum, and it was the only rock she built upon, for she dared not see her sisters, fearing that they would succeed in preventing her from accomplishing her darling object.

We cannot but feel deep interest in the perplexities of this innocent though imprudent girl, when we find her wandering without a protector in such a metropolis as London, and, under every disadvantage, determined to make applications, which, from the general bad character of the performers, she feared must expose her to injury and insult. Alive to fears and apprehensions which she hardly attempted to define, she often changed her lodgings, and, by the singularity of her conduct, excited the suspicions of those of whom she was afraid. The accredited reports of her adventures, at this juncture, savor somewhat of fiction, but it is certain that her finances were now in a deplorable condition. She had funds enough to pay for the shelter of the room in which she slept, but the deduction of this expense left but a mere trifle to procure the means of supporting life. In fact she lived solely upon a little bread, which she ate stealthily in her room, walking out every day at dinner-time on the pretence of invitations from her friends. Meanwhile her exertions were unremitted; she called upon King, had hopes of an engagement, and while waiting for this welcome event, she wrote a letter to her sister Hunt. Her appearance was well calculated to impress the beholder with

‘The might, the majesty of loveliness.’

She was tall, slender and erect; her complexion was pure, and her features exquisitely beautiful; her hair of a golden auburn, glossy and luxuriant; ‘her eyes full at once of spirit and sweetness; a combination of delicacy, that checked presumption, and of interest that captivated fancy.’

After spending ten or twelve days in London, she called upon her sisters and took up her residence with one of them,

at whose house she met Mr. Inchbald and thence continued an intimacy, in the course of which her future husband became daily more delighted with her. The reception of a packet from Standingfield put her in the best humor, and she then for the first time visited the theatre, which she afterwards regularly attended, employing her time in study, seeking instruction, endeavoring to obtain an engagement, and receiving all the assistance and advice which Mr. Inchbald could afford. She became acquainted with Dodd, with whom she exchanged visits, and for a time was in hopes of procuring an engagement by his agency. His subsequent conduct, however, was treacherous: he aimed at nothing less than her ruin. Escaping from this danger, she continued her negotiations with Griffith, who appears to have been a tolerably well-principled man, although he hesitated not to use equivocation, and to put off her application with promises. Her prospects, however, soon materially altered. Mr. Inchbald pressed her to bestow her hand upon him, and they were married first by a Catholic priest, and the ensuing morning according to the Protestant ceremonial. The duties of a player's life rarely allow him a holiday, and on the evening of his wedding, Inchbald played in the *Jealous Wife*, (ominous title!) and his bride and her sister attended the representation. The new-married pair departed soon after for Bristol. At a town upon the route they met Dodd, who revenged himself by not wishing them joy of their marriage; a neglect which they easily overlooked. At Bristol, they took lodgings near the College-green. Mrs. Inchbald determined to commence the study of her chosen profession with vigor, and accordingly wrote out the part of Cordelia. Her choice of this character evinced great taste and judgment. She was unwilling to appear first in the inferior parts, and then gradually work her way upwards, because she was conscious that her personal loveliness would secure attention and respect in a higher character, and excuse even a very great deficiency. She had subdued, in a great degree, the impediment in her speech, but the slow enunciation it compelled her to adopt, must always have been irksome to the ear. Accordingly we find that her first appearance was far from being brilliant. By practice, however, and the assistance of her husband, she hit upon a better mode of declamation, than that which she had pursued at first.

After a visit to London and Standingfield, we find her engaged in Digges's company at Glasgow, where she played *Cordeia*. Her old admirer, Wilson, was a comedian on the same boards, but he appears to have behaved towards her with respect and delicacy. Her range of acting was rather limited, and it is very evident, from the fact of her being frequently compelled to assume the most subordinate characters, that her talents as an actress were not distinguished. Thus, shortly afterwards, at Edinburgh, she played *Anne Bullen*, *Cordeia*, and *Calista*, and, during the same engagement, one of *Mac-heath's* ladies and a female *Bacchanal* in *Comus*. Her beauty enabled her occasionally to assume the highest line of characters, but not to keep it. During the height of the favorable feeling produced by her youth and beauty, she played *Calphurnia*, *Lady Anne*, *Lady Percy*, *Lady Elisabeth Grey* in the *Earl of Warwick*, *Fanny* in the *Clandestine Marriage*, *Desdemona* to her husband's *Othello* on their benefit night, and *Aspasia* to his *Tamerlane*.

With regard to the domestic felicity of Mrs. Inchbald, we must remark that little jars terminated the honey-moon, and the lady, with what reason is unknown, suspected her husband of infidelity. Afterwards, with a determination to punish him, she permitted a Mr. Sterling to pay her frequent visits. Although throughout her life Mrs. Inchbald's honor was unimpeached, yet she frequently exhibited a vein of childish humor and eccentricity, which not seldom degenerated into imprudence. Thus, carried away by a whim, she suffered Inchbald to believe, that she seriously regarded her visiter with a favorable eye. On leaving Edinburgh for Glasgow, she corresponded with Sterling, and matters came to such a point between her and her husband, that on their return they had separate lodgings. In a recess, during which the company opened a theatre at Greenock, Mrs. Inchbald was the leading-star of all. She played *Miss Aubrey* in *Cumberland's Fashionable Lovers*, *Angelica* in the *Constant Couple*, and *Violante* in the *Wonder*. In 1774, she commenced at Aberdeen the study of the French language, as a necessary preparation for composition. Some notes upon her domestic life about this time are very curious. One in particular records, that on the 19th of January, she read '*Sufferings of the Lord*,' to console Mr. Inchbald in his sickness, and that on the 20th they quarrelled concerning the partition of their salary.

In 1776, they embarked for France, having left the theatre of Edinburgh on account of a disturbance at the play-house, in which Mr. Inchbald was concerned. He, at this time, confiding in his supposed skill as a miniature-painter, hoped to get his living in that character. But he does not appear to have possessed talent, and the plan shortly failing, he returned with his wife to England after an absence of about eleven weeks. It now became absolutely necessary to obtain an engagement in some theatrical company. At Brighton their funds ran so low, that they were obliged to go into the fields and eat raw turnips to sustain life. They went finally to London, and in 1777, Mrs. Inchbald began to commit to paper the brief outlines of a novel, which she entitled 'a Simple Story.' Kemble was now, as heretofore, a firm friend to her. His advice was always freely given and cheerfully accepted, and at no period did there exist any thing to disturb the kindly feeling, with which Mrs. Inchbald regarded John Philip and his accomplished sister. During the same year the Inchbalds played at Canterbury, in company, we believe, with Holcroft, who was a literary adviser of Mrs. Inchbald.

In 1779 Mr. Inchbald died, and his widow experienced the pangs of real sorrow. The union could hardly be called a love-match upon her side, and there was much in her husband's character to try her temper; but his weak state of health and heavy misfortunes drew forth the natural affection of his wife. For his sake she bore much ill treatment from a natural son of his, to whom she behaved with a liberality which showed her affection at least, if not her prudence. She called the day of Mr. Inchbald's death, a 'day of horror,' and the week following a 'week of *grief*, *horror*, and almost *despair*.' A long Latin epitaph was written for him by John Kemble.

Mrs. Inchbald had a London engagement during the season of 1780-81, playing some elevated characters, but often compelled to do the 'walking-parts' in pantomime. At the expiration of the season, she paid a visit to her family at Standringfield. She always kept up a kindly intercourse with her relations, and, when circumstances placed it in her power, assisted them liberally with the money she had acquired by labor, and preserved by the strictest and most self-denying economy. In the summer of 1782, she engaged herself to

Colman at a salary of thirty shillings a week. She yet complained of being obliged to support the mute parts of pantomimes. But from all spectacles and dumb shows, the manager would never part with her lovely face and fine commanding figure. At this time she finished a farce, which she sent to Mr. Harris, who readily advanced her £20 for it. Colman purchased her farce of the 'Mogul Tale,' for a hundred guineas. The good prices, and the applause she obtained for her early productions, stimulated her to new labor. Her comedy, 'I'll Tell You What,' brought £300. Mr. Harris was the purchaser of 'Appearance is against Them,' at £100, and the copy-right she sold for £40. She now liberally assisted her family, some individuals of which had become considerably involved. When, after her mother's death, her brother George remitted her the interest on her share of the family property, she at once settled it on one of her relations. While she was assiduously engaged in composition, she supported herself by nightly labor as an actress. For her productions she was well paid. We will instance the *Midnight Hour*, a mere translation, which she sold for £130, and a farce, *Animal Magnetism*, for which she obtained the same sum. She wrote, at the desire of Sheridan, a farce for Mrs. Jordan, which she called the *Wedding Day*. The price demanded for it was £200, and Sheridan not only paid her for it, but did so in advance, a transaction which certainly deserves commemoration. Mrs. Inchbald, in 1792, describes herself as 'cheerful, content, and sometimes rather happy.' Her novel '*Nature and Art*' is by no means equal to her '*Simple Story*,' which rapidly gained favor with the public. The latter is highly praised by Miss Edgeworth, who became a correspondent and friend of Mrs. Inchbald, met her in London, and induced her on that occasion to quit the retirement to which she had doomed herself, and reappear for a short time in society. Miss Edgeworth introduced her to Madame de Staël, who received her with great attention. They endeavored to persuade Mrs. Inchbald frequently to enter society, but she replied that it would only make her solitude more oppressive, 'for,' said she, 'I have no one to whom I can communicate kindly compliments and praises, such as you have bestowed upon me.' Madame de Staël turned to her daughter and said; 'Alas! she has no child.'

Among the most interesting parts of the work, are several letters from Miss Edgeworth. These are valuable in them-

selves, and throw an agreeable light upon the character and genius of Mrs. Inchbald. The first is as follows, and will serve much better than any remarks that we might make, as a criticism upon her principal work, the Simple Story.

Edgeworth's Town, Jan. 14th, 1808.

‘I am going to do a very bold thing. Personally a stranger to Mrs. Inchbald myself, I am going to take the liberty of introducing one of my brothers to her. Your kindness to my brother Lovell will perhaps incline you more in Sneyd’s favor than any thing I could urge. If you should be so good as to let him be in your society, I think you will find in him the same affectionate temper and good disposition which characterized his brother, and abilities, of which I will say nothing, lest I say too much.

‘I hope you will not suspect me of the common author practice of returning praise for praise, when I tell you that I have just been reading for the third,—I believe for the fourth time,—the “Simple Story.” Its effect upon my feelings was as powerful as at the first reading. I never read *any* novel,—I except *none*,—I never read any novel which affected me so strongly, or that so completely possessed me with the belief in the real existence of all the people it represents. I never once recollected the author whilst I was reading it; never said or thought, *that’s a fine sentiment*,—or, *that is well expressed*, or, *that is well invented*. I believed it all to be real, and was affected as I should be by the real scenes if they had passed before my eyes; it is truly and deeply pathetic. I determined, this time of reading, to read it as a critic, or rather, as an author, to try to find out the secret of its peculiar pathos. But I quite forgot my intention in the interest Miss Milner and Dorriforth excited; but *now it is all over*, and that I can coolly exercise my judgment, I am of opinion, that it is by leaving more than most other writers to the imagination, that you succeed so eminently in affecting it. By the force that is necessary to repress feeling, we judge of the intensity of the feeling; and you always contrive to give us, by intelligible and simple means, the measure of this force. Writers of inferior genius waste their words in describing feeling; in making those who pretend to be agitated by passion, describe the effects of that passion and talk of the *rending of their hearts*, &c. A gross blunder, as gross as any Irish blunder, for the heart cannot feel and describe its feelings at the same moment. It is “*being a bird in two places at once*.” What a beautiful stroke is that of the child, who exclaims, when Dorriforth lets go his hands, “*I had like to have been down!*”

‘I am glad I have never met with a Dorriforth, for I must in-

evitably have fallen desperately in love with him ; and destitute of Miss Milner's power of charming, I might have died in despair. Indeed, I question whether my being free from some of her faults would not have made my chance worse ; for I have no doubt that, with all her wisdom and virtue, he loved her the better for keeping him in a continual panic by her coquetry. I am excessively sorry you have made her end *naughtily* ; though I believe this makes the story more moral. Your power as a pathetic writer is even more conspicuous in the second volume, however, than in the first : for notwithstanding the prodigious and painful effort you require from the reader to jump over, at the first page, eighteen years, and to behold at once Dorriforth old, and Miss Milner a disgraced and dying mother, with a grown-up daughter beside her ; notwithstanding the reluctance we feel at seeing Dorriforth as an implacable tyrant and Sandford degraded to a trembling dependant, yet against our will, and absolutely against our resolution to be unmoved, you *master* our hearts, and kindle a fresh interest, and force again our tears. Nothing can be finer than the scene upon the stairs, where Dorriforth meets his daughter and cannot unclasp her hand, and when he cannot call her by any name but " Miss Milner, dear Miss Milner."

' I wish Rushbrooke had not been a *liar*. It degrades him too much for a hero. I think you sacrificed him too much to the principle of the pyramid. The mixture of the father's character in the daughter is beautiful. As to Miss Worldley, who cannot help loving her, and thinking she is like their best friend, whoever that may be ?

' Mrs. Horton is excellent comic. Her moving all the things about in the room to lessen the embarrassment, and her wishing (without being ill-natured) to see a quarrel, that she might have some sensations, is admirable. Did you really draw the characters from life or did you invent them ? You excel, I think, peculiarly, in avoiding what is commonly called *fine writing*,—a sort of writing which I detest ; which calls the attention away from the *thing* to the *manner*, from the feeling to the language, which sacrifices everything to sound, to the mere rounding of a period ; which mistakes *stage effect* for *nature*. All who are at all used to writing, know and detest the *trick of the trade* immediately ; and, speaking for myself, I *know* that the writing, which has least the appearance of literary *manufacture*, almost always pleases me the best. It has more originality in the narration of fictitious events, it most surely succeeds in giving the idea of reality, and in making the biographer, for the time, pass for nothing. But there are few, who can in this manner bear the mortification of staying behind the scenes. They peep out, eager for applause, and destroy all

illusion, by crying "*I said it; I wrote, I invented it all! Call me on the stage and crown me directly.*" I don't know whether you have ever met with a little work, called "*Circumstances respecting the life of the late Charles Montford, Esq. by George Harley, Esq.*" When you have half an hour's leisure, do me the favor to look at it, for I think, it possesses something of the same kind of merit as the "*Simple Story,*" though it has many faults; and, except now and then, nothing like its pathos. But it resembles it in creating a belief of its being real. I often thought while I was reading it, this might have been better written, but I am glad the circumstances did not fall into the hands of a professed novel-writer, who might perhaps have *made more of them* for common readers, but who must have spoiled them for me by the *manufacture*. It must be true, I thought, and the biographer must be a real friend, because he cares so little about himself and his own writing, so that he does justice to the memory of his friend.

'I have lately been told that it is a mere fiction, and that it was written by a gentleman whose name I forget, a brother of Mrs. French. Perhaps you know the name.

'My father and Mrs. Edgeworth beg to be kindly remembered to you, and wish you would come here and see us, as we cannot go to England at present. Can you? Will you?

'affectionately yours,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.'

The next letter shows an increase of kindly feeling and interest; its sentiments evidently come warm from the heart, and the desire of the fair writer to serve her friend is very manifest.

'My dear Mrs. Inchbald,—Your letters, like your books, are so original, so interesting, and give me so much the idea of truth and reality, that I am more and more desirous to be personally acquainted with you; and in this wish I am most heartily joined by Mrs. Edgeworth, a person whom, though you have not seen her in print, you would, I'll answer for it, like better than any one author or authoress of your acquaintance,—as I do, my father only excepted: for further particulars, enquire of S. E. We rejoice exceedingly that you like him, and are sure that the deeper you go into his character, the better it will suit you. I wish you would try what Edgeworth's *Town* could do to excite agreeable emotions in your mind. Upon your own principle, the sea would be as good for you as a fire or a high wind. Danger there is none, except in the imagination,—not even enough to create a

sensation. Sea-sickness is over in a few hours, and my father, who is more sea-sick than most people, bid me tell you just now, as he got on horseback, that you are a *goose* if you don't come to us. How dare I write such a word? But I wish you to know my father and all of us, just as we are. If you will oblige us, consult Sneyd, and he will show you how very easily the journey can be arranged.

'There are some authors, whose books are so much the best part of them, that one can think of nothing else in writing to them; but in writing to Mrs. Inchbald, I can at this moment think of nothing but the wish to see *her*, and to enjoy her society.

'Yours sincerely,

'MARIA EDGEWORTH.'

P.S. 'I remember, when I had gone on a *wild-geese* chase to a *friend's* house, who turned out to be a fine lady instead of a friend, I was just in the solitary, melancholy state you describe; and I used to feel relieved and glad when the tea-urn came into the silent room, to give me a "sensation by the sound of its boiling."

The following contains some remarks on the epistolary style of Mrs. Inchbald, as compared with that of Walter Scott.

'The best thanks, my dear Mrs. Inchbald, for your letter, would be to have seen how much pleasure that letter gave to this whole family,—father, mother, brother, sister, author! The strength and originality of your thoughts and expressions distinguish your letters from all we receive; and when we compared it with one from Walter Scott, received nearly at the same time, and read both letters again, to determine which we like the best, upon the whole the preference was given, I think, by the whole breakfast-table, (a full jury) to Mrs. Inchbald's. Now I must assure you that, as to quantity of praise, I believe Walter Scott far exceeded you; and as to quality, in elegance none can exceed him,—but still in Mrs. Inchbald's letter there was an undefinable originality, and a carelessness about her own authorship, and such a warm sympathy both for the fictitious characters of which she had been reading, and for that Maria Edgeworth to whom she was writing, as carried away all suffrages. We particularly like the frankness with which you find fault, and say such and such a stale trick was unworthy of us. None but a writer who had herself excelled, could, as you did, feel and allow for the difficulties of composition,—nor could any other so well judge where I was wrong or right in dilating and suppressing. I am glad you trembled lest I should have produced old Reynolds again. Most of those who have mentioned him to me have regretted that they did not see more of him, and have longed to have heard of his meeting with his daughter.

‘ It is of great use as well as delight to us, to see any thing we write tried upon such a person as you, who will and can do what so few have either the courage or power to attempt,—tell the impressions really made upon their feelings, and point out the causes of these impressions.

‘ I do not know what you mean by saying that every sensible mother is like Lady Mary Vivian. You are requested to explain. I wish I could find any excuse for begging another letter from you.

‘ *Perhaps* we shall, as we at present intend, be in London next spring.

‘ Last night, my father and I were numbering the people we should wish to see. Our list is not very numerous, but Mrs. Inchbald was one of the first persons, we at the same moment eagerly named. Believe me to be, my dear madam,

‘ your obliged and grateful,

‘ MARIA EDGEWORTH.’

After having met Mrs. Inchbald in London, on the eve of the production of her novel of ‘ Patronage,’ Miss Edgeworth wrote the following letter.

Edgeworth’s Town, Dec. 9, 1813.

‘ My dear Mrs. Inchbald,—I have desired our publisher to send you ‘ Patronage ’ before it is published. I will not tell you of my *fears* or of my hopes in sending it to you. You will understand them all, and I am confident that you will write to me at least as frankly, now you have seen me, as you did *before we met*. I do not say *before we became acquainted* with each other ; for in the crowds in which we met, it was impossible to become acquainted, with any degree of rational intimacy.

‘ We have to thank you, however, and we heartily do thank you, for the effort you made to gratify us, which succeeded completely. My father desires me to say, that *he* cannot help hoping that ‘ Patronage ’ will come to a second edition ; and he trusts that you know we are glad to profit by good advice, when we can get it, therefore he earnestly *expects* your corrections for a second edition.’

Mrs. Inchbald, pursuant to the author’s request, after a perusal of ‘ Patronage ’ gave her criticisms upon it, in a letter to which Miss Edgeworth refers in the following.

Edgeworth’s Town, Feb. 14, 1814.

‘ My dear Mrs. Inchbald,—Nobody living but yourself could or would have written the letter I have just received from you. I wish you could have been present when it was read at the breakfast-table, that you might have seen what hearty entertainment

and delight it gave to father, mother, author, aunts, brothers, sisters, all,—to the number of twelve. Loud laughter at your utter detestation of poor Erasmus,—as nauseous as his medicines ; and your impatience at all the variety of impertinent characters who distract your attention from Lord Oldborough. Your clinging to him quite satisfied us all ; it was in his character that my father placed his dependence ; and we all agreed that if you had not liked him, there would have been no hopes for us. We are, in the main, of your opinion, that Erasmus and his letters are tiresome ; but then please [to] recollect that we had our moral to work out, to show, to the satisfaction of the reader, how, in various professions, young men may get on without patronage. Wherever we are tiresome, we may be pretty sure of this ; and after all, as Madame de Staël says, “ Good intentions go for nothing in works of art ; ” much better in the French, *La bonne intention n'est de rien en fait d'esprit*. You will make me forswear truth altogether ; for I find whenever I meddle with the least bit of truth, I can make nothing of it, and it regularly turns out ill for me. The things to which you object are facts, and that which you most abhor is true.

‘ A nobleman, whom I never saw and whose name I have forgotten, (else I should not have used the anecdote), said the word you thought I could not have written and ought not to have known how to spell. But, pray observe, that the fair authoress does not say this odious word in her own proper person. Why impute to me the characteristic improprieties of my characters ? I meant to mark the contrast between his Grace’s pride and the coarseness of his expression. I have now changed the word *severe* into *coarse* to mark this to the reader ; but I cannot alter without spoiling the *fact*. I tried if *saliva* would do, but it would not : so you must bear it as well as you can, and hate his Grace of Greenwich as much as you will,—but don’t hate me. Did you hate Cervantes for drawing Sancho Panza eating behind the door ?

‘ My next fact, you say, is an old story ; and may be it belonged to your widow originally ; but I can assure you it happened very lately to a gentleman in Ireland, and only the parting with the servant was added. I must admit the story is ill-told and not worth telling ; and you must admit that it was natural, or it would not have happened twice.

‘ The sixpence under the seal is my third fact. This happened in our own family. One of my own grandfather’s uncles forged a will, and my grandfather recovered the estate my father now possesses, by the detection of the forgery in a sixpence under the seal. I agree with you that it was quite ill-judged and

awkward to tell that the old man was perjured, before his perjury was detected. I have sent to have that altered. I wish, if it is not too much trouble, you would take the trouble to alter it, and send your correction to Johnson, St. Paul's Churchyard, to Mr. Miles; for I have not and cannot get the fourth volume, and I have been obliged to write to the corrector of the press, and to trust to his discretion, and he may bungle it. I hope the fourth volume will not be reprinted before this reaches you.

'Thank you, thank you, thank you! for liking the two Clays; but pray don't envelope all the country gentlemen of England in *English Clay*.

'Thank you, thank you, thank you! says my father, for liking Lady Jane Granville. Her ladyship is his favorite; but nobody has mentioned her in their letters but yourself; I cannot believe that you ever resembled that selfish, hollow-hearted Lady Angelica.

'Would you have ever guessed that the character of Rosamond is like ME? All who know me intimately say that it is as like as possible; those who do not know me intimately would never guess it.

'Sneyd is in Dublin with his bride,—a bride no more, but dearer as a wife than bride. She was a Miss Broadhurst, and was called an heiress, because she had a considerable independent property. I draw largely upon your belief in my veracity, when I tell you, that this lady was utterly unknown to me and this family when I wrote "the Absentee," and that I took the name of Broadhurst because it did not belong to any person I knew, and drew the character from pure imagination. Sneyd never thought of her, until after "the Absentee" was published. Afterwards, perhaps, it led them a little towards each other. Is not this a curious coincidence? I hardly dare tell it, it has so much the air of falsehood; she is very amiable,—not handsome, but a *tall*, not a *little plain* girl. He is *happy*, as you know he is capable of being, from having found a wife exactly suited to him, and of whom he is passionately fond.'

Mrs. Inchbald died in 1821. Her success in life was wholly the result of her own exertions. Self-taught and inexperienced, she composed those works to which she owed her fame and little property, at such times as she could snatch from the wearing duties of an arduous profession. In the course of her life, she became acquainted with many individuals of the higher and lower classes, but it does not appear that she made any influential friends: on the con-

trary, she herself negotiated her own affairs and prospered. In private life, her conduct, though tinged with eccentricity, did not lie open to any grave charge, and her benevolence and warmth of heart were great. She was a fond daughter, a kind sister, and a faithful wife. As an actress, she must have claimed attention from her loveliness and correct conception of her author's meaning; but the slowness and monotony of her delivery destroyed her hopes of gaining popular applause. As a dramatist, she is distinguished for a certain ingenuity and vivacity of dialogue; her wit however is infrequent, and the intrigues of her comedies often present the unnatural combinations of farce. Her plays, with few exceptions, still retain the stage. Her talents as a novelist were by no means inferior; and had she devoted her whole attention to this department of literature, she would undoubtedly have produced works of lasting celebrity.

ART. VII.—*Miss Leslie's Pencil Sketches.*

Pencil Sketches, or Outlines of Character and Manners.

By MISS LESLIE. Philadelphia. 1833.

THIS work is a collection of tales, some of which had appeared before in other forms, and been received by the public with decided and, we think, well-merited approbation. The new ones are not inferior in value to the others. They are all written in a correct, easy and spirited style, and exhibit a very keen and nice observation of the various scenes of domestic life, with a happy talent for working up the results in a narrative form. The fable is in all cases simple, and with perhaps one exception not deficient in probability. The characters, though at times overcharged, are in the main correctly drawn. The conversations, which they hold with each other, are conducted with point and propriety. In this particular, Miss Leslie approaches more nearly to the models furnished by the great masters in the art of novel-writing, than any of her American predecessors. Occasional descriptions of local scenery are introduced with effect. Mrs. Washington Potts is perhaps the best, as it is the longest and most elaborate, of the tales, though Frank Finlay is in